

## Good Stories Well Told

"The yarns spun by the Methodist ministers," says Representative Harts, of Georgia, "reminds me that a successful but waggish merchant of Washington, my state, the old home of Alex Stephens, played a joke on one of these men which caused the bishop to transfer him to another charge."

"The merchant had a very fine horse, and one day he got a crowd around his store and made the announcement that he would give the animal to the man who could tell the biggest lie. The local minister was in the crowd, and he said to the merchant, 'Brother James, I don't think you could do exactly right. I would like to own that horse, but I don't feel that I can make a trial, for I never told a lie in my life.'

"Friends," said the merchant, after hearing the minister, "my plans for an hour or two's fun are knocked on the head. Parson Wheeler says that he wanted to enter the contest, but that he never told a lie in his life. The horse is his, gentleman, for I said that it should go to the man who told the biggest lie. Let everybody walk up and shake hands with Parson Wheeler and congratulate him on winning the animal."

"The good minister was forced to take the horse, but the grown people and the youngsters made it so uncomfortable for him by singing out, 'I never told a lie,' that he asked for and received another appointment."

"The little weevil may get the best of us on cotton, but Texas will continue to produce some of the brightest children in the United States," is the opinion of Congressman Cooper of that state, who backs up his belief with this good story:

"A neighbor of mine has a 4-year-old who has a fondness for pie. The other night while being put in his nightgown preparatory to going to bed the little fellow was told to say his prayers. Kneeling down by the bedside he began, but balked when he reached the words of our daily bread. His father repeated it to him, thinking he had forgotten the words, but the little fellow looked up and asked:

"Papa, why should I pray for bread when I like pie so much gooder?"

Genuine western elegance is described by Representative Bartholdt of Missouri:

"There was a little waspish, pompous lawyer in a certain town of my state who was the prosecuting attorney in a case where a young man had been forced in self defense to use his shooting iron on a tough. The lawyer argued to the jury that the young man was heartless and had committed a cold-blooded murder. 'Yes,' he said, 'the prisoner's heart is as hard as an adamant rock, and he sits before you as isolated as the smoke on Greenland's icy mountains. He is a murderer. Cain killed his brother; he shed innocent blood, and for that act God put a mark on him that lasted him all his future generations. And I have no doubt, gentlemen of the jury, God would have put him in a penitentiary if the people of that day had owned such an institution.'

"When politics opens up in earnest," says a Missouri representative, the people of my state enter with vigor, and vim, and even home folks and home interests are forgotten. Many years ago an old farmer by the name of Lancourt was elected judge of the county court, this being his reward for faithful services to the Democratic party. He was very proud of his position, and filled the station, if not with ability, at least with dignity. A short time after his elevation the 'un-terrified' held a meeting in the county and the new judge was chosen chairman. While presiding over the deliberations of the body one of his sons came riding into town under whip and spur, and rushing into the court house, where the meeting was being held, he told his father that the prairie was on fire; that the farm was in danger of being destroyed, and that his mother said for him to hasten home.

"Thereupon the judge assumed the dignity of a Roman senator and speaking very deliberately, in a voice loud enough for every man in the room to hear distinctly, he said:

"My son, go back and tell your mother to do the best she can to trust in providence, for I have matters of more importance to attend to."

"Dr. Richard Dearing was one of the worst jokers my state ever produced," relates a representative from Kentucky. "He was always ready with his jokes, no matter how serious the subject might be. During the prevalence of an epidemic of cholera in the vicinity of Marysville, the doctor didn't permit his wit to remain idle. One day a steamboat landed at the wharf, and a solitary passenger was seen wending his way up the landing, carpet-bag in hand. The doctor saw him, and rushing into a card room he grabbed a two-foot rule, and halting the stranger, said:

"I beg your pardon, sir, but I must request you to stand still while I take your measure."

"My measure?" questioned the stranger, "what do you want with my measure?"

"Our city council," answered the doctor, "has appointed me to measure all strangers who visit our town, so that I may have coffins ready for them as soon as possible after the ready made ones have been used up. For not a single stranger who has stopped here during the past ten days has lived more than two or three hours. We bury them as soon as the pulse has ceased to beat, and I try to have coffins ready."

"The man gave the doctor one long look, and then darted down the street to the wharf, landing the boat just as he pulled out."—Washington Times.

A political lieutenant once announced to Senator Quay a disastrous defeat, making the announcement in blunt, brusque terms.

Senator Quay gave the man one of his peculiar direct glances, and smiled slightly. Then he bowed up, and said: "You have broken this news gently. You remind me of an Irishman. This Irishman had great faith in his diplomacy and diplomacy, and one day when a boy was killed at the quarry he told the men to leave everything in his hands, and he would break the news to the boy's mother as it should be done."

"So he went home, put on a black suit and a black tie, and he knocked at the door of the boy's mother's house. 'Good mornin', ma'am,' he said. 'Tis a sad accident yer boy Tom's gold watch has had.'

"Why," said the mother, 'Tom never had a gold watch.'

"Sure an' that's lucky," said the news breaker, "for there's twenty tons of rock fallen on him."

Stories of railroad accidents were being told at Tuxedo. Spencer Trask, banker and author of New York, said: "In a certain railway collision, one of the victims lay for a long time on his back across the ties. Finally two men picked him up, carried him to the station and placed him on the floor."

"Well he easier here," they said, "till the doctor comes."

"The doctor came a little later."

"This poor chap is done for, I'm afraid," he said, glancing at the prostrate victim.

"Then he knelt down, lifted one of the man's closed eyelids, and peered into a dull, blank, unseeing, lifeless eye."

"Yes, he's dead all right. Take him away," said the doctor.

"But the only one of the injured man

moved slightly and a feeble voice murmured:

"That was my glass eye, you fool."

Baron Moncheur, the Belgian minister, visited Baltimore last month. At a dinner in Baltimore he said:

"The spirit of business enterprise and speculation is what impressed me most profoundly in America. For instance, I was riding one day on the outskirts of Washington, and at a certain place I dismounted and got a little boy to hold my horse. I was gone about ten minutes, and on my return I found the first boy gone, and another, a smaller one, standing at the horse's head."

"How is this?" I said. "You are not the boy I left my horse with."

"No sir," said the tiny urchin; "I speckulated and bought the job off the other fellow for a dime."

"Of course, after that," the minister ended, "it was impossible for me to 'bear' the market."

Says a writer in the Philadelphia Times: Mrs. Mary E. Mumford, the well known club woman and ex-member of the board of education, told this story herself to the mothers' congress: "Not long ago she entered a crowded street car and grasped a strap in front of a lady, who was accompanied by two children, a boy and a girl. The children were well bred, and both at once began to rise; but the little girl, who was the elder, got to her feet first and offered her place, which was accepted with smiling thanks. The boy was plainly disappointed.

"Mother," he said in a clear voice, "can't I give my seat to the next fat lady who gets in the car?"

Judge E. H. Gary, chairman of the executive committee of the steel trust, used to live in the Illinois town of Wheaton, says a writer in the New York Tribune.

"One day in Wheaton," Judge Gary said recently, "I took dinner with a clergyman and his family. The clergyman had an 8-year-old son called Joe, and Joe was a very bright boy."

"Look here, Joe," I said during the course of the dinner, "I have a question to ask you about your father."

"Joe looked gravely at me."

"All right," I'll answer your question," he said.

"Well," said I, "I want to know if your father doesn't preach the same sermon twice sometimes."

"Yes, I think he does," said Joe, "but the second time he always hollers in different places from what he did the first time."

Mrs. Wickes knew that her cook was a theatergoer, so she thought she was giving her a treat when she asked her to take Mrs. Wickes' little son to see "The Monks of Malabar."

"And how did you like it?" asked Mrs. Wickes when they returned from the performance.

"It's all very well for them as likes that sort of thing, but when I go to the theater for pleasure," replied the cook, "I like to see somebody heavy and treacherous."

In the millinery show room of one of the large department stores in Philadelphia a customer inquired of a saleswoman what they charged to clean feathers.

"Ten cents apiece," was the answer.

"Oh, I could never pay that price!" gasped the lady.

"How many have you? If you have a sufficient number we might make a reduction in the price."

"Why, I couldn't count them, for I have two beds full."

Needless to say, she was in the wrong department.

De Wolf Hopper is in his usual good spirits, rejoices in the successful revival of "Wang," and is full of humor and anecdote. Seated in the center of a party of choice spirits he told the following amusing trick which he played on Nat Goodwin last summer.

"Nat, you must know," said Hopper, "owns a beautiful place over in England on the banks of the Thames, and was always talking about how glad he would be to get rid of this property, which was more or less of a white elephant to him."

"Whenever we met at Larchmont over Sunday I heard him talking about this house and expressing his desire to sell it. He was at that time engrossed in his study of 'Bottom,' and a few weeks after ward started on his tour. I like to get a rise out of Nat. As a matter of fact, I like to get one out on anybody, and when he was at Buffalo I sent him the following telegram: 'Will you take \$100,000 for your English riverside house?' Reply, Morris, Hoffman House."

"Nat, thinking it was some real estate agent, wired back immediately: 'Certainly.' My reply was simply, 'I thought you would.'

"What Nat is supposed to have said is not for publication."

There is a well known story told by Dean Ramsey years ago to two ladies of his acquaintance. "You are a wonderful thing," said one of them. "That the French men were victorious over the French in battle?" "Not a bit," said the other, "dinner ye ken the Russian say, their prayers before gone into battle?" "Aye," returned the first, "but canna the Frenchmen say their prayers as well?" The reply was: "Hoot! Jabberin' bodie! What could understand them?"

One Alexander, manager of a Glasgow theatre, who was also a very bad actor, when he had become an old man, was playing the part of Romeo one night, the Juliet being a young girl. After swallowing the poison, he pointed dead, when the grotesqueness of the situation evoked applause from the gallery. Alack (the same by which he was universally known) felt this was meant for mockery. Rising to his feet, he came to the front of the stage and said: "You think I can't play Romeo, but I can play Romeo. I have played it before, naming some people of distinction, and I shall play it again." He then lay down and died a second time.

An attendant at Mount Vernon not long since found a lady weeping most bitterly and audibly with her handkerchief at her eyes. He stopped up to her and said: "Are you in any trouble, madam?"

"No, sir," she sobbed.

"I saw you weeping."

"Ah," said she, "how can one help weeping at the grave of the Father of his Country?"

"Oh, indeed, madam," says he, "that's it. The tomb is over yonder. This is the ice house."

A shoemaker came to the minister asking his advice. "That sweep, my landlord, had given him notice to quit and he would have nowhere to lay his head."

"The minister could only advise him to lay his case before the Lord. A week later the shoemaker returned and found the minister busy and merry."

"That was grand advice ye gived me, minister," said the man. "I laid my case before the Lord, as ye tellt me, an' now the sweep's dead."

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